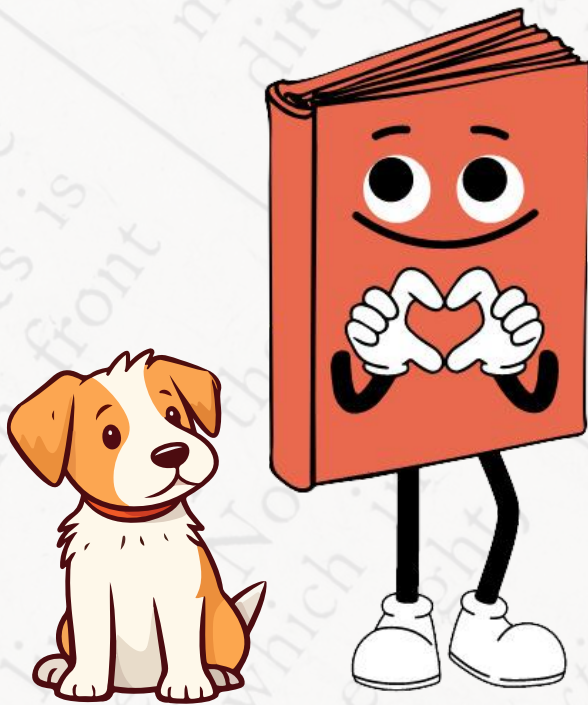


WNC BOOK LISTS

TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

ANIMAL MAIN CHARACTER



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

In this resource you will find a curated list of books that feature animals as the main character as well as a variety of accompanying materials.

How to Use This Resource

1. Choose a title from the animal main character list.
2. Scan the QR code to play the read-aloud video.
3. Students complete the response sheet while listening.
4. Students vote: Would you keep reading?
5. Display the book cover poster to build classroom book buzz.

Classroom Use Ideas Quick List:

- First Chapter Friday
- Sub plans
- Book tasting stations
- Library preview lessons
- Early finisher reading activities



To check the reading level, video length or to find a book purchasing link, look at this [Google Doc](#) that organizes ALL of my First Chapter Friday read aloud videos alphabetically.

Table of Contents

Page 2: Instructions/Table of Contents

Page 4: What is First Chapter Friday?

Pages 5-6: Book Tracking Charts

Page 7: Book List

Page 8: Full List Book Cover Poster

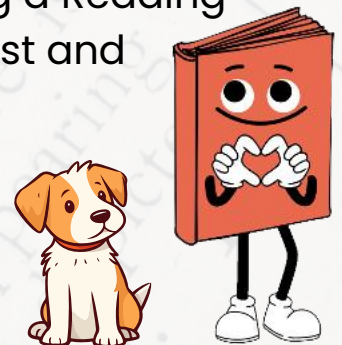
Pages 10-20 Individual Book First Chapter Friday Sheets

Pages 22-33: Individual Book Posters

** More resources will be added in the future including a Reading Round Up Video to briefly explain every video on this list and possibly even some thematic coloring sheets.

As always, please email me with any title requests or questions. (wordnerd@amandazieba.com)

HAPPY READING ANIMAL LOVERS!



Word Nerd Daily

an app from Amanda Zieba

MUST TRY!

FREE!



First Chapter Friday Videos

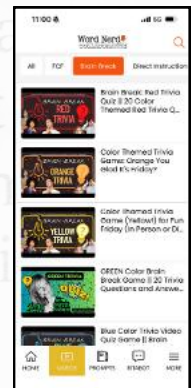


Writing Prompt Library

ChatBot for Reading Recs and Lesson Planning

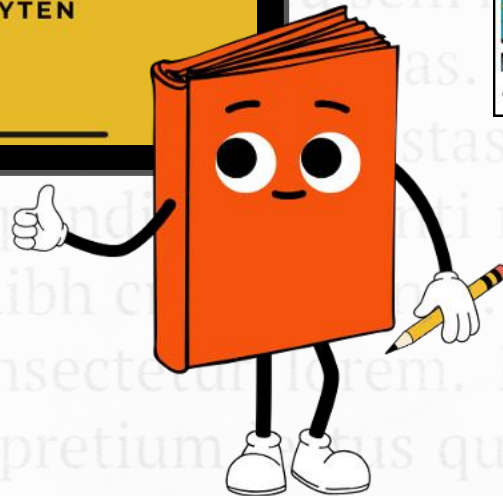


Brain Break Videos



Word Nerd
COLLABORATIVE

MOBILE APP BY
VYTEN



AVAILABLE FOR APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES



FIRST CHAPTER *Friday Videos*

Not sure how First Chapter Friday works?

Check out this [video](#) for a full explanation and 4 implementation ideas.



If you prefer a written description in lieu of a video, click [here](#).

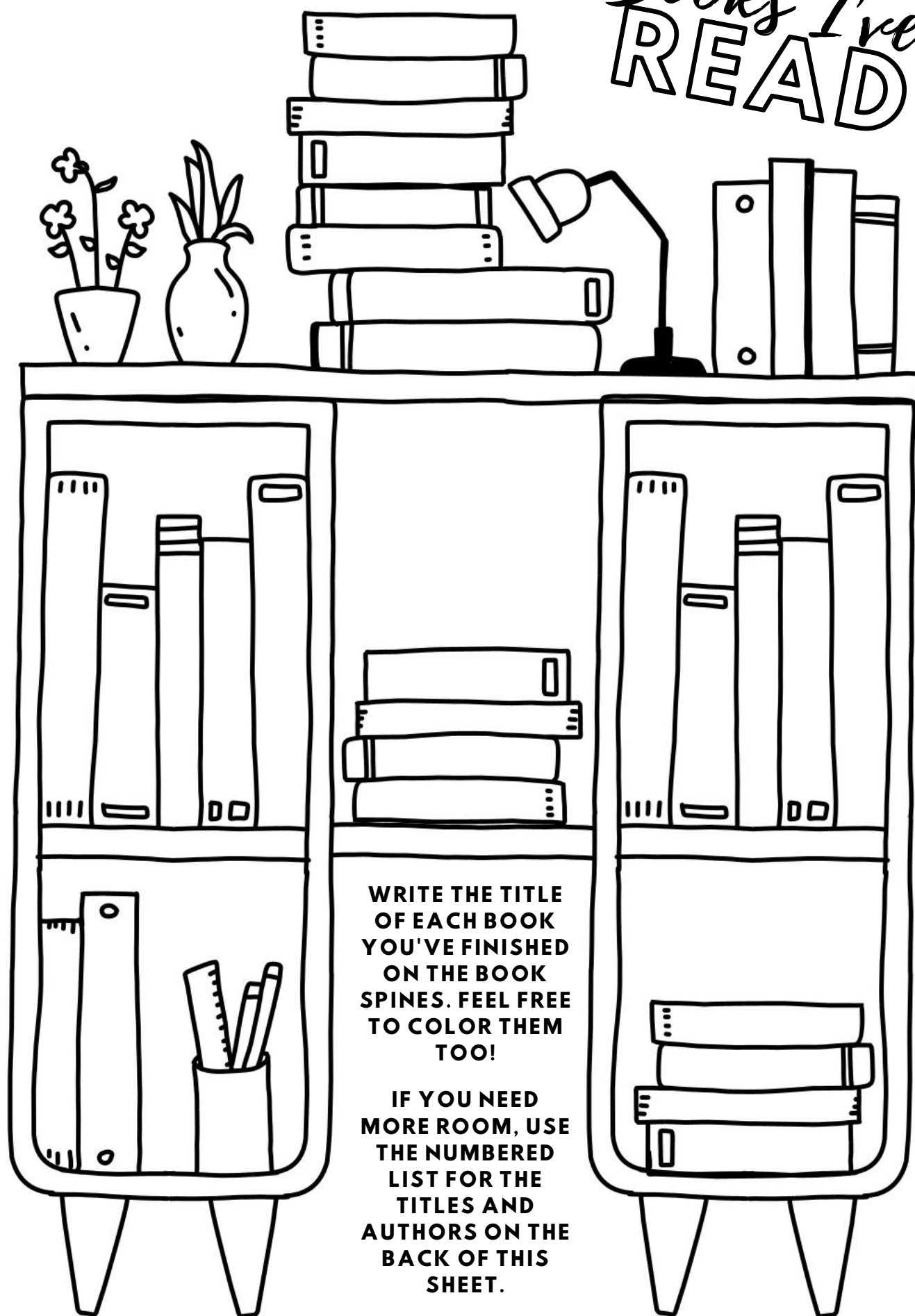
[Click here](#) for a live, continually updated, Google Doc of the First Chapter Friday videos on my channel. Additionally you will find links to purchase the books and watch the read aloud videos, as well as book reading levels, genre/format, video length and more!

All my best,
Amanda Zieba

[illegible]

NAME: _____

Books I've READ



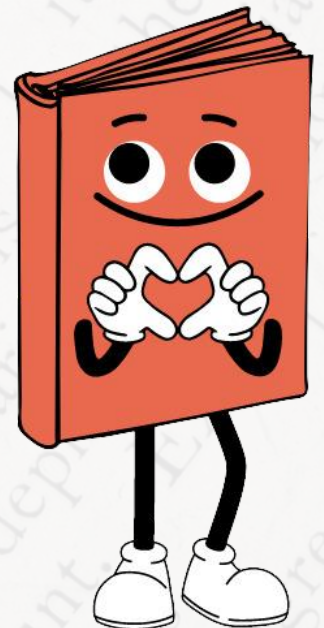
ANIMAL MAIN CHARACTER



The books on this list feature an animal as the/one of the main characters.

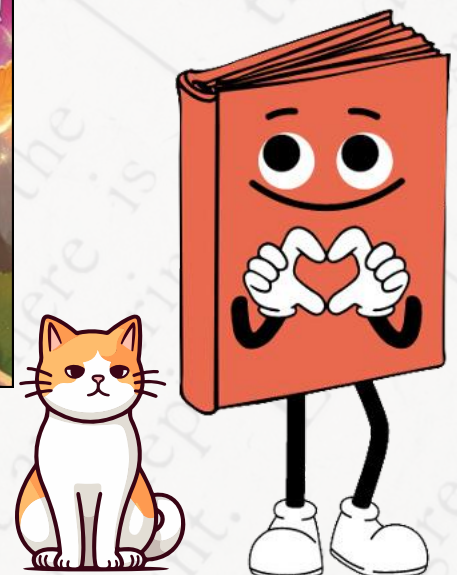
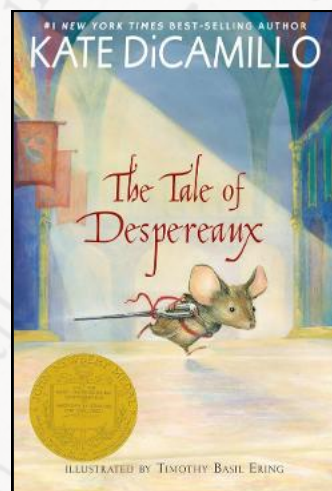
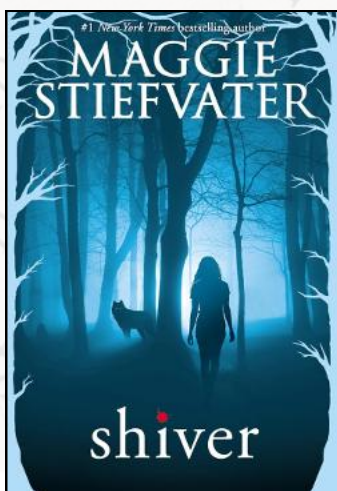
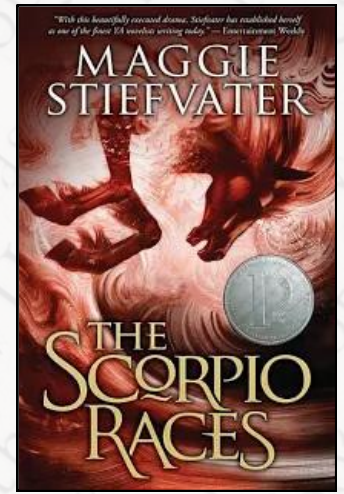
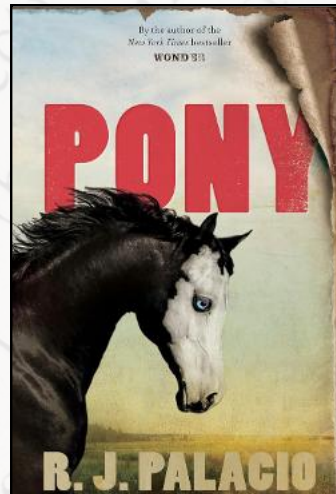
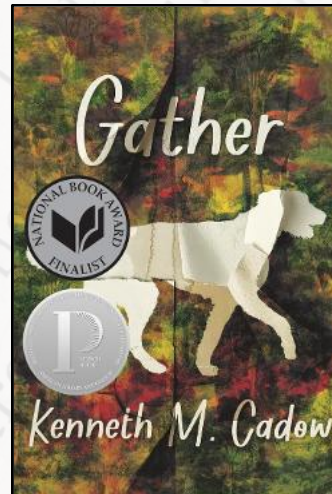
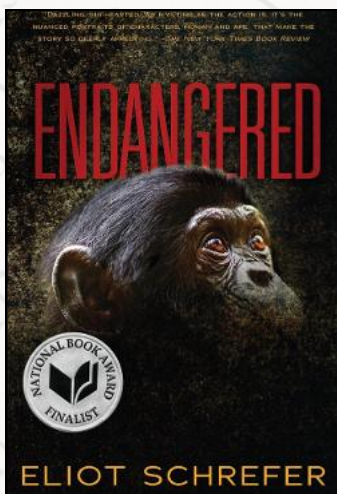
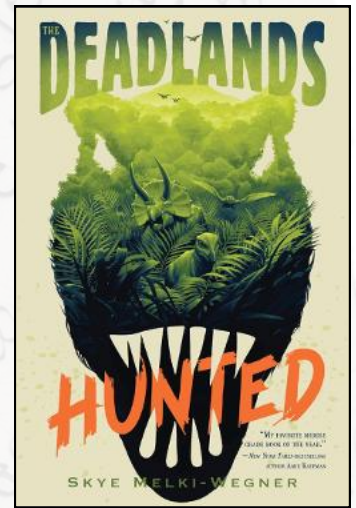
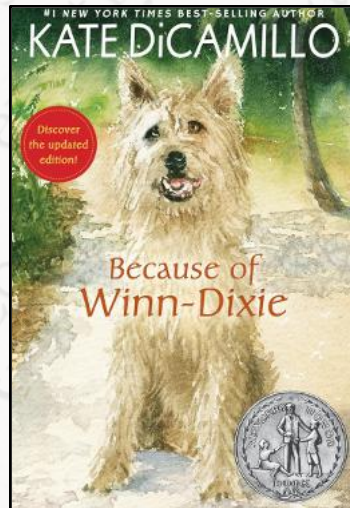
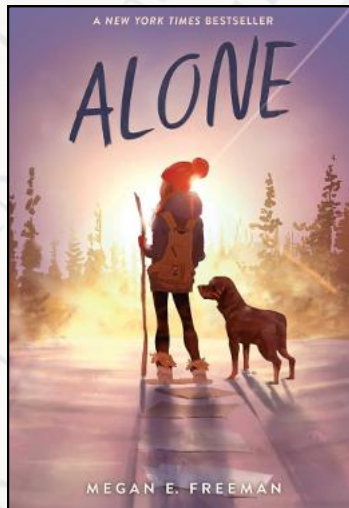


- **Alone (dog)**
by Megan E. Freeman
- **Because of Winn Dixie (dog)**
by Kate DiCamillo
- **Concrete Cowboy (horses)**
by G. Neri
- **Deadlands (dinosaurs)**
by Skye Wegner Melki
- **Endangered (bonobo - chimp)**
by Eliot Schrefer
- **Gather (dog)**
by Kenneth M. Cadow
- **Pony (horse)**
by RJ Palacio
- **The Scorpio Races (horse)**
by Maggie Stiefvater
- **Shiver (wolves)**
by Maggie Stiefvater
- **The Tale of Despereaux (mouse)**
by Kate DiCamillo
- **Vanya and the Wild Hunt**
by Sangu Mandanna



WNC BOOK LISTS * TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

ANIMAL MAIN CHARACTER



WNC BOOK LISTS *
TOPIC CURATED TITLE SUGGESTIONS

INDIVIDUAL BOOK SHEETS

NAME _____ DATE _____

Concrete Cowboy
by G. L. Moore

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?
When Cole's mom dumps him in the mean streets of Philly to live with the dad he's never met, the last thing he expects is to see a horse—let alone a stable full of them. He may not know much about cowboys, but what he does know is that horses ain't black, and they don't live in the hood. But in this hood, the City threatens to shut down the stables. Cole realizes it's time to stand up for what's right—the Cowboy Way.

This book also includes illustrations from Jesse Joshua Watson.

What I think I'll do:
I am a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Lexile Level: 4.8
AR Reading Levels: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK

NAME _____ DATE _____

Alone
by Megan E. Freeman

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?
A group of children investigate the threat that pranged large-scale evacuations in this powerful and dramatic companion novel to the New York Times bestselling Alone told in multiple POV's.

After an imminent yet annual danger forces people across Colorado to leave their homes, a group of kids, including an aspiring filmmaker and a budding journalist find themselves in the same evacuation camp. As they cope with the aftermath of having their world upended, they grow curious about the mysterious threat.

And as they begin to investigate, they start to discover that there's less truth and more cover-up to what they're being told. Can they get to the root of the conspiracy, expose the bad actors, and bring on and to the upheaval before it's too late?

What I think I'll do:
I am a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Lexile Level: 4.8
AR Reading Levels: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK

NAME _____ DATE _____

Endangered
by Eliot Schreder

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?
Cogan is a dangerous place, even for people who are trying to do good. When Sophie has to wait for her brother's surgery for leukemia, she's not far from being there. Her life, and for the first time she feels responsible for another creature. But when an animal rescue center is attacked in the country, the sanctuary is attacked, and the time of the most escape.

This book also includes illustrations from Jesse Joshua Watson.

What I think I'll do:
I am a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Lexile Level: 4.8
AR Reading Levels: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK

NAME _____ DATE _____

Pony
by R.J. Palacio

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?
When Silas Bird wakes in the dead of night, he watches powerlessly as three strangers take his father away. Silas is left shaken, scared, and alone, except for the presence of his companion, Mr. Newell... who happens to be a ghost.

But then a mysterious pony shows up at his door, and Silas knows what he has to do. So begins a perilous journey that will connect him with his past, his future, and the unknowable world around him.

What I think I'll do:
I am a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Lexile Level: 4.8
AR Reading Levels: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK

NAME _____ DATE _____

Shiver
by Maggie Stiefvater

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?
For years, Grace has watched the wolves in the woods behind her house. One yellow-eyed wolf—her wolf—is a chilling presence she can't seem to live without.

Meanwhile, Sam has lived two lives: in winter, the frozen woods, the protection of the pack, and the silent company of a fearless girl. In summer, a few precious months of being human... until the cold makes him shift back again.

Now, Grace meets a yellow-eyed boy whose familiarity takes her breath away. It's her wolf. It has to be. But as winter nears, Sam must fight to stay human—or risk losing himself, and Grace, forever.

What I think I'll do:
I am a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Lexile Level: 7.40
AR Reading Levels: 4.8

I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK

NAME _____ DATE _____

Vanya and the Wild Hunt
by Sangu Mandanna

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?
Eleven-year-old Vanya Valen has always felt like she doesn't fit in. She's British-Indian in a mostly white town in England, her parents aren't talk about their past, and she has ADHD. Oh, and she talks to her wolf.

When her family is attacked by a monster she's always felt existed in fairytales, Vanya discovers that her parents have secrets, and that there are a lot more monsters out there. Overnight, she's whisked off to the enchanted library of the school of Aurum, where she joins the ranks of archmages and wizards. Life at Aurum is unexpected, exciting and wonderful. But even here, there's an escaping monster. The mysterious, powerful Wild Hunt is on the prowl, and Vanya will need all her creativity and courage to unleash its leader and stop them before they destroy the only place she's ever truly belonged.

What I think I'll do:
I am a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

Lexile Level: 7.40
AR Reading Levels: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

WHAT I THINK

FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

Name _____

Date _____



Alone

by Megan E. Freeman



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

When twelve-year-old Maddie hatches a scheme for a secret sleepover with her two best friends, she ends up waking up to a nightmare. She's alone—left behind in a town that has been mysteriously evacuated and abandoned.

With no one to rely on, no power, and no working phone lines or internet access, Maddie slowly learns to survive on her own. Her only companions are a Rottweiler named George and all the books she can read. After a rough start, Maddie learns to trust her own ingenuity and invents clever ways to survive in a place that has been deserted and forgotten.

As months pass, she escapes natural disasters, looters, and wild animals. But Maddie's most formidable enemy is the crushing loneliness she faces every day. Can Maddie's stubborn will to survive carry her through the most frightening experience of her life?

Who Wrote It?

Megan E. Freeman attended an elementary school where poets visited her classroom every week to teach poetry, and she has been a writer ever since. *Alone* is Megan's first book and it took her 8 years to write! The idea for it came she read *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell in a Mother-Daughter Book Club. She was thinking about *Karana* being left behind on the island, and I wondered what might happen if a modern-day seventh grader was left behind in a Colorado town. Ideas for poems come from things I see or hear or smell or taste, or from thoughts that pass through my mind. I love to travel, and wherever I go, I explore until I find a local bookstore. I always buy at least two books (one book of poetry by a local poet and one other book I'm excited to read). Then I take a picture of the store so I can remember it.



She used to live in northeast Los Angeles, central Ohio, northern Norway, and on Caribbean cruise ships. Now she lives in northern Colorado. You can learn more about Megan on her website: www.meganefreeman.com.

AR Reading Level: 4.7

Lexile Level: 690L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

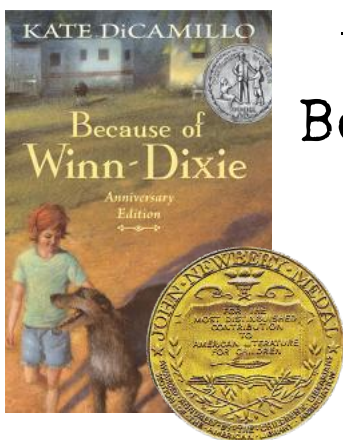
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Because of Winn-Dixie

by Kate DiCamillo

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

One summer's day, ten-year-old India Opal Buloni goes down to the local supermarket for some groceries – and comes home with a dog. But Winn-Dixie is no ordinary dog. It's because of Winn-Dixie that Opal begins to make friends. And it's because of Winn-Dixie that she finally dares to ask her father about her mother, who left when Opal was three. In fact, as Opal admits, just about everything that happens that summer is because of Winn-Dixie.

- Newbery Award Winner
- Also a movie!

Who Wrote It?

I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, raised in Clermont, Florida, and currently live in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I write for both children and adults and I like to think of myself as a storyteller. Here are a few more facts about me: I am short. And loud. I hate to cook and love to eat. I am single and childless, but I have lots of friends and I am an aunt to three lovely children (Luke, Roxanne, and Max) and one lovable dog (Ramona). I have won the Newbery Medal twice. I think of myself as an enormously lucky



person: I get to tell stories for a living. Kate writes 2 pages a day, 5 days a week.

www.katedicamillo.com

AR Reading Level: 3.9

Lexile Level: 670

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

Concrete Cowboy

by G. Neri



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

When Cole's mom dumps him in the mean streets of Philly to live with the dad he's never met, the last thing he expects to see is a horse—let alone a stable full of them. He may not know much about cowboys, but what he knows for sure is that cowboys ain't black, and they don't live in the 'hood. But in this 'hood, horses are a way of life, and when the City threatens to shut down the stables, Cole realizes it's time to stand up for what's right—the Cowboy Way.

This book also includes illustrations from Jesse Joshua Watson.

This book originally had a different cover and title! The first title was Ghetto Cowboy.

Who Wrote It?

I am a storyteller, filmmaker, artist, and digital media producer. In 1999, I started writing and illustrating for kids, but it wasn't until I started writing for teens around 2004 that things started to happen. Now, I have my first three teen books out, a new agent, and a long list of projects to create. I couldn't ask for more. I'm currently living off the Gulf Coast of Florida with my wife Maggie, who's a professor of sociology, and our daughter Zola, who likes to draw like her old man. I spend most of my time in my studio, but I do like to troll the rivers by



our house looking for alligators. You can learn more about G and his work - Teen Fiction for the Real World - on his website: gregneri.com

AR Reading Level: 4.0

Lexile Level: 670L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

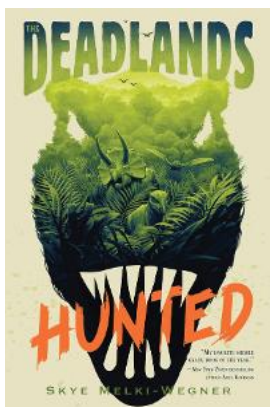
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Deadlands

by Skye Melki-Wegner



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Wings of Fire meets Jurassic Park in this action-adventure middle grade debut series by Skye Melki-Wegner about five outcasts—and former enemies—who are the only hope to save their warring kingdoms from impending doom.

Battle rages between the dinosaur kingdoms of Cretacea. When the Fallen Star struck, it brought death and despair, ash and toxic rain. But some dinosaurs survived . . . and were changed. Their minds grew alert. They learned to speak. To dream. To wage war. As the two remaining dinosaur kingdoms fight for territory, Eleri, the disgraced son of a prince, is exiled from his home for saving an enemy soldier. Banished to the merciless Deadlands, a terrifying desert full of tar pits, poisonous gas, and ruthless carnivores, he must join forces with a group of questionable allies—including the enemy soldier he saved—to avoid becoming prey. When Eleri and his fellow exiles discover the horrific truth behind the war, the unlikely heroes must do all they can to save their kingdoms from a lurking predator. . . and a secret plot that might destroy them all.

AR Reading Level: N/A

Who Wrote It?

Skye Melki-Wegner started writing as soon as she could hold a pen. She was immediately drawn to fantasy — and soon her notebooks overflowed with dragons, pixies, wizards and various magical shenanigans. After graduating with an honors degree in law, she decided to pursue her passion and prioritized writing fantasy



books over pursuing a legal career. Sky lives in Melbourne, Australia. Visit Skye's website [here](#).

Lexile Level: N/A

I want to read this book: YES / NO

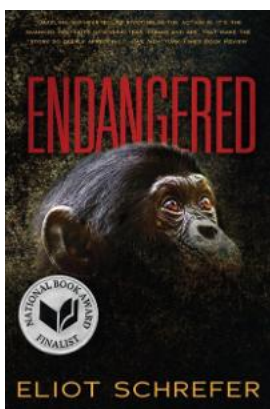
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Endangered by Eliot Schrefer



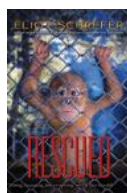
Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Congo is a dangerous place, even for people who are trying to do good. When Sophie has to visit her mother at her sanctuary for bonobos, she's not thrilled to be there. Then Otto, an infant bonobo, comes into her life, and for the first time she feels responsible for another creature. But peace does not last long for Sophie and Otto. When an armed revolution breaks out in the country, the sanctuary is attacked, and the two of them must escape unprepared into the jungle. Caught in the crosshairs of a lethal conflict, they must struggle to keep safe, to eat, and to live. In **ENDANGERED**, Eliot Schrefer plunges us into a heart-stopping exploration of the things we do to survive, the sacrifices we make to help others, and the tangled geography that ties us all, human and animal, together.

The other 3 books in the series are...



Who Wrote It?

Eliot wrote a fantasy novel when I was in eighth grade, which featured loads of glowing blue swords, archers in green leather, and monsters rearing in anguish. After a childhood spent in Illinois, Connecticut, California, Maryland, and Florida, Schrefer attended Harvard University, where he graduated with High Honors in French and American literature. After a year teaching at a boarding school in Rome, he settled down in New York City. His works have been translated into many languages including German, Russian, Polish, Taiwanese, Bulgarian, and Japanese. Most recently, Schrefer joined the faculty of Fairleigh Dickinson's low residency MFA program, as well as the MFA in writing for children at



Hamline University. You can find him on Twitter @EliotSchrefer, and online here at www.EliotSchrefer.com. (A full interview, in which Eliot asks himself questions, can also be seen on his website. :)

AR Reading Level: 6.2

Lexile Level: 900L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

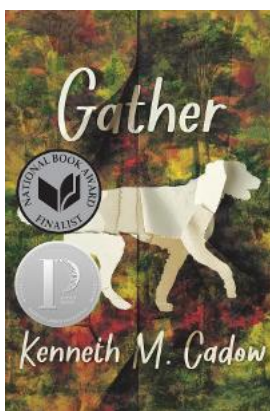
☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Gather

by Kenneth M. Cadow

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

** I'd recommend this book for grades 7+. Please know there are trigger warnings related to addiction and extreme poverty. More about this information can be found in the video description box. **

What's It About?

Ian Gray isn't supposed to have a dog, but a lot of things that shouldn't happen end up happening anyway. And Gather, Ian's adopted pup, is good company now that Ian has to quit the basketball team, find a job, and take care of his mom as she tries to overcome her opioid addiction. Despite the obstacles thrown their way, Ian is determined to keep his family afloat no matter what it takes. And for a little while, things are looking up: Ian makes friends, and his fondness for the outdoors and for fixing things lands him work helping neighbors. But an unforeseen tragedy results in Ian and his dog taking off on the run, trying to evade a future that would mean leaving their house and their land. Even if the community comes together to help him, would Ian and Gather have a home to return to?

Told in a wry, cautious first-person voice that meanders like a dog circling to be sure it's safe to lie down, Kenneth M. Cadow's resonant debut brings an emotional and ultimately hopeful story of one teen's resilience in the face of unthinkable hardships.

A 2023 National Book Award Finalist
A Michael L. Printz Honor Book

"Arguably one of the finest novels of the year."—Booklist (starred review)

Who Wrote It?

Ken grew up in Poughkeepsie, NY next to the Hudson River and surrounded by trees, as one of 7 siblings. He loved the outdoors and spent a lot of time exploring the woods and salt marshes around his house. He says he has terrible handwriting and sold his first story for twenty-five cents. Ken read A LOT. His fifth grade teacher told him, 'I hope you don't burn your eyes out this summer,' - meaning, don't read too many books! Lol! Old Yeller, The Animal Family, James and the Giant Peach and Dominic were some of his favorites. As grown up, Ken is a teacher and co-



Photo by Lars Blackmore

principal. He writes in a cabin near his house. Gather is his first book and it has won 3 awards. He has a wife, 3 children and a dog, Quinnie.

AR Reading Level: Unavailable

Lexile Level: 970L

I want to read this book: YES / NO



WHAT I THINK

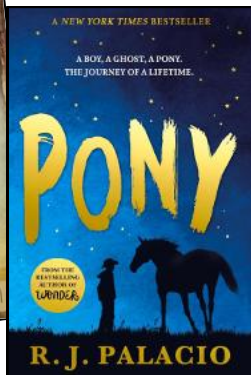




Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Pony

by R.J. Palacio

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

When Silas Bird wakes in the dead of night, he watches powerlessly as three strangers take his father away. Silas is left shaken, scared, and alone, except for the presence of his companion, Mittenwool . . . who happens to be a ghost.

But then a mysterious pony shows up at his door, and Silas knows what he has to do. So begins a perilous journey to find his father--a journey that will connect him with his past, his future, and the unknowable world around him.

The bestselling author of *Wonder* returns with an unforgettable adventure about a boy on a quest to rescue his father, with only a ghost as his companion and a mysterious pony as his guide.

AR Reading Level: 5.1

Who Wrote It?

A first generation American (her parents were Colombian immigrants), Palacio was born on July 13, 1963 in New York City. Her birth name is Raquel Jaramillo (Palacio was her mother's maiden name). Palacio attended The High School of Art & Design in Manhattan, and then majored in illustration at the Parsons School of Design. She spent her junior year at The American University in Paris, where she traveled extensively before returning to NYC with an eye toward making her career in illustration. R. J. Palacio lives in Brooklyn, NY with her husband, two sons and two dogs (Bear and Beau). Her debut novel, *Wonder*, has been on the New York



Times bestseller list since March, 2012, and has sold over 5 million copies worldwide. You can learn more about RJ on her website: www.wonderthebook.com.

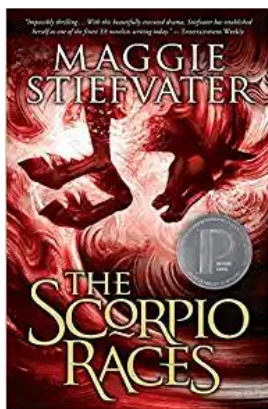
Lexile Level: 740L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

The Scorpio Races

by Maggie Stiefvater



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

A spellbinding novel from #1 New York Times bestselling author Maggie Stiefvater.

Some race to win. Others race to survive. It happens at the start of every November: the Scorpio Races. Riders attempt to keep hold of their water horses long enough to make it to the finish line. Some riders live. Others die. At age nineteen, Sean Kendrick is the returning champion. He is a young man of few words, and if he has any fears, he keeps them buried deep, where no one else can see them. Puck Connolly is different. She never meant to ride in the Scorpio Races. But fate hasn't given her much of a choice. So she enters the competition - the first girl ever to do so. She is in no way prepared for what is going to happen. As she did in her bestselling Shiver trilogy, author Maggie Stiefvater takes us to the breaking point, where both love and life meet their greatest obstacles, and only the strong of heart can survive. The Scorpio Races is an unforgettable reading experience.

Who Wrote It?

I am Maggie Stiefvater. I write books. Some of them are funny, ha-ha, and some of them are funny, strange. Several of them are #1 NYT Bestsellers. I play several musical instruments (most infamously, the bagpipes). I make art, and I sometimes write about cars for magazines like Road & Track and Jalopnik. Currently I live in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia with my husband, my two children, some cows, five dogs who fart recreationally, a horse of many colors, a criminally insane cat, an interminable number of miniature



silky fainting goats, and one 1973 Camaro named Loki. I like things that go. You can learn more about Maggie at www.maggiestiefvater.com.

AR Reading Level: 5.5

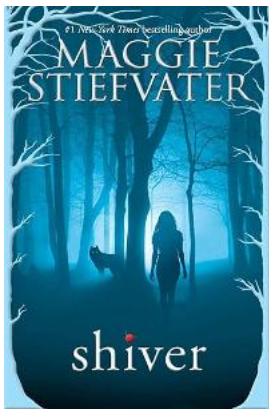
Lexile Level: 840L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

Shiver

by Maggie Stiefvater

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.



Read Aloud Video

What's It About?

For years, Grace has watched the wolves in the woods behind her house. One yellow-eyed wolf—her wolf—is a chilling presence she can't seem to live without.

Meanwhile, Sam has lived two lives: In winter, the frozen woods, the protection of the pack, and the silent company of a fearless girl. In summer, a few precious months of being human... until the cold makes him shift back again.

Now, Grace meets a yellow-eyed boy whose familiarity takes her breath away. It's her wolf. It has to be. But as winter nears, Sam must fight to stay human—or risk losing himself, and Grace, forever.

- Book 1 in a series of 4!

Who Wrote It?

I am Maggie Stiefvater. I write books. Some of them are funny, ha-ha, and some of them are funny, strange. Several of them are #1 NYT Bestsellers.

I play several musical instruments (most infamously, the bagpipes) and make art in several media (most typically, colored pencils).

Currently I live in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia with my husband, two



children, some cows, seven dogs, an interminable number of miniature silky fainting goats, and a mating pair of growly tuner cars. I like things that go.

AR Reading Level: 4.9

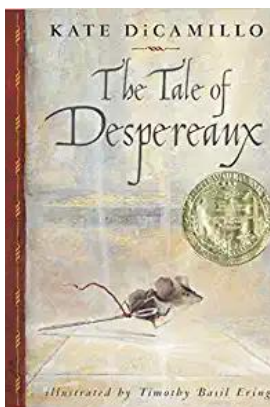
Lexile Level: 740

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



Name _____

Date _____

The Tale of Despereaux

by Kate DiCamillo



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Welcome to the story of Despereaux Tilling, a mouse who is in love with music, stories, and a princess named Pea. It is also the story of a rat called Roscuro, who lives in the darkness and covets a world filled with light. And it is the story of Miggery Sow, a slow-witted serving girl who harbors a simple, impossible wish. These three characters are about to embark on a journey that will lead them down into a horrible dungeon, up into a glittering castle, and, ultimately, into each other's lives. And what happens then? As Kate DiCamillo would say: 'Reader, it is your destiny to find out.'

- This book won the Newbery Medal in 2004.
- This book was turned into a movie.
- Illustrations by Timothy Basil Ering accompany the story.

Who Wrote It?

I was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, raised in Clermont, Florida, and currently live in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I write for both children and adults and I like to think of myself as a storyteller. Here are a few more facts about me: I am short. And loud. I hate to cook and love to eat. I am single and childless, but I have lots of friends and I am an aunt to three lovely children (Luke, Roxanne, and Max) and one lovable dog (Ramona). I have won the Newbery Medal twice. I think of myself as an enormously lucky



person: I get to tell stories for a living. You can learn more about me at www.katedicamillo.com

AR Reading Level: 4.7 Lexile Level: 670L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.

Name _____

Date _____



Includes
Author
Interview!

Vanya and the Wild Hunt by Sangu Mandanna



Read Aloud Video and
Author Interview

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

What's It About?

Eleven-year-old Vanya Vallen has always felt like she doesn't fit in. She's British-Indian in a mostly white town in England, her parents won't talk about their pasts, and she has ADHD. Oh, and she talks to books. More importantly, the books talk back. When her family is attacked by a monster she believed only existed in fairytales, Vanya discovers that her parents have secrets, and that there are a lot more monsters out there. Overnight, she's whisked off to the enchanted library and school of Auramere, where she joins the ranks of archwitches and archivists. Life at Auramere is unexpected, exciting and wonderful. But even here, there's no escaping monsters. The mysterious, powerful Wild Hunt is on the prowl, and Vanya will need all her creativity and courage to unmask its leader and stop them before they destroy the only place she's ever truly belonged.

Who Wrote It?

The Sang in Sangu is pronounced sung, like the past tense of sing. And I pronounce Mandanna so that it rhymes with bandanna. Sangu Mandanna was 4 years old when an elephant chased her down a forest road and she decided to write her first story about it. The first time she decided she was going to be an author, she was about 9 years old. She wrote a story about a brave and intrepid heroine named Sangu who saves a group of kidnapped girls while on a seaside holiday. Years and many, many manuscripts later, she signed her first book deal. Sangu grew up with very few stories about brown girls, so those are the stories she now wants to write. She wants readers like her —and all readers—to read



and love stories about brown girls who have adventures, fall in love, explore the stars, fight the system, and so much more. Sangu now lives in Norwich, a city in the east of England, with her husband and kids.

AR Reading Level: Unavailable

Lexile Level: 790L

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆☆ WHAT I THINK ☆☆



Use this graphic organizer with the First Chapter Friday videos on YouTube from the Word Nerd.



PREVIEW & PREDICT



Read Aloud Video



Look at the objects featured on the YouTube thumbnail and book cover and then make a few predictions.



I predict this story will be about...

Handwriting practice area with ten horizontal dotted lines for writing predictions.

INDIVIDUAL BOOK POSTERS



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

ALONE

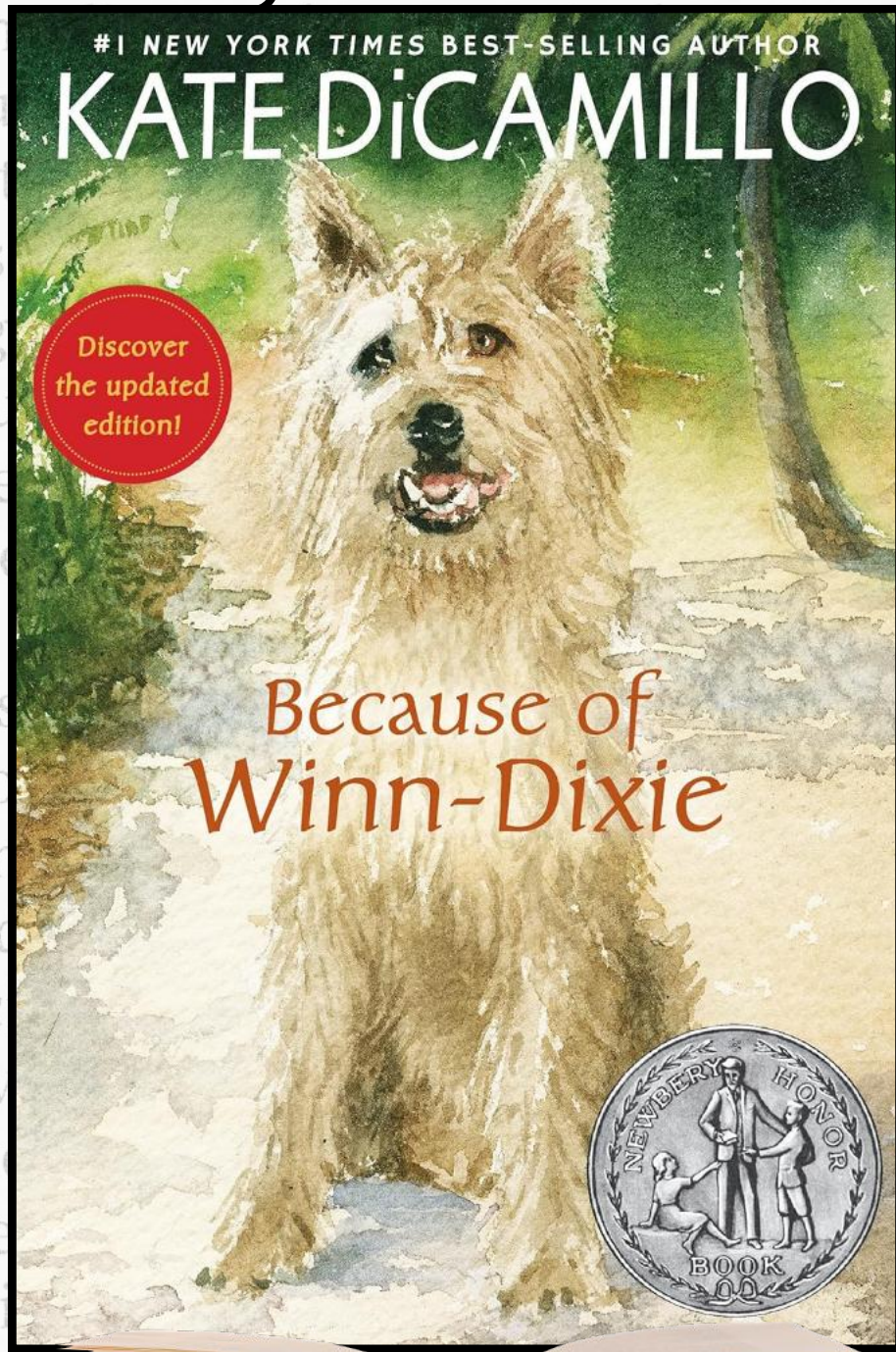
By Megan E. Freeman



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE

By Kate DiCamillo



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

CONCRETE COWBOY

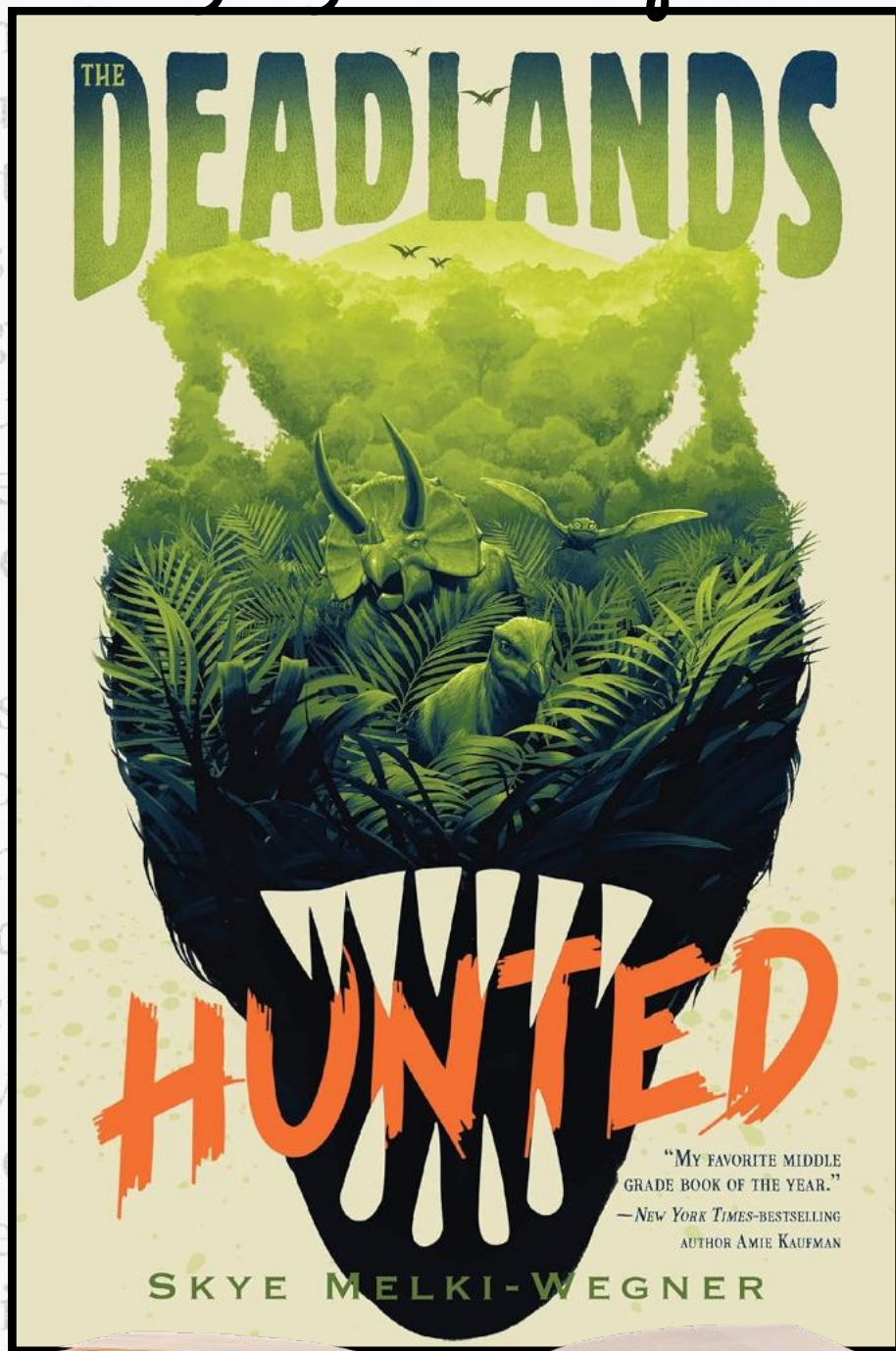
By G. Neri



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

DEADLANDS

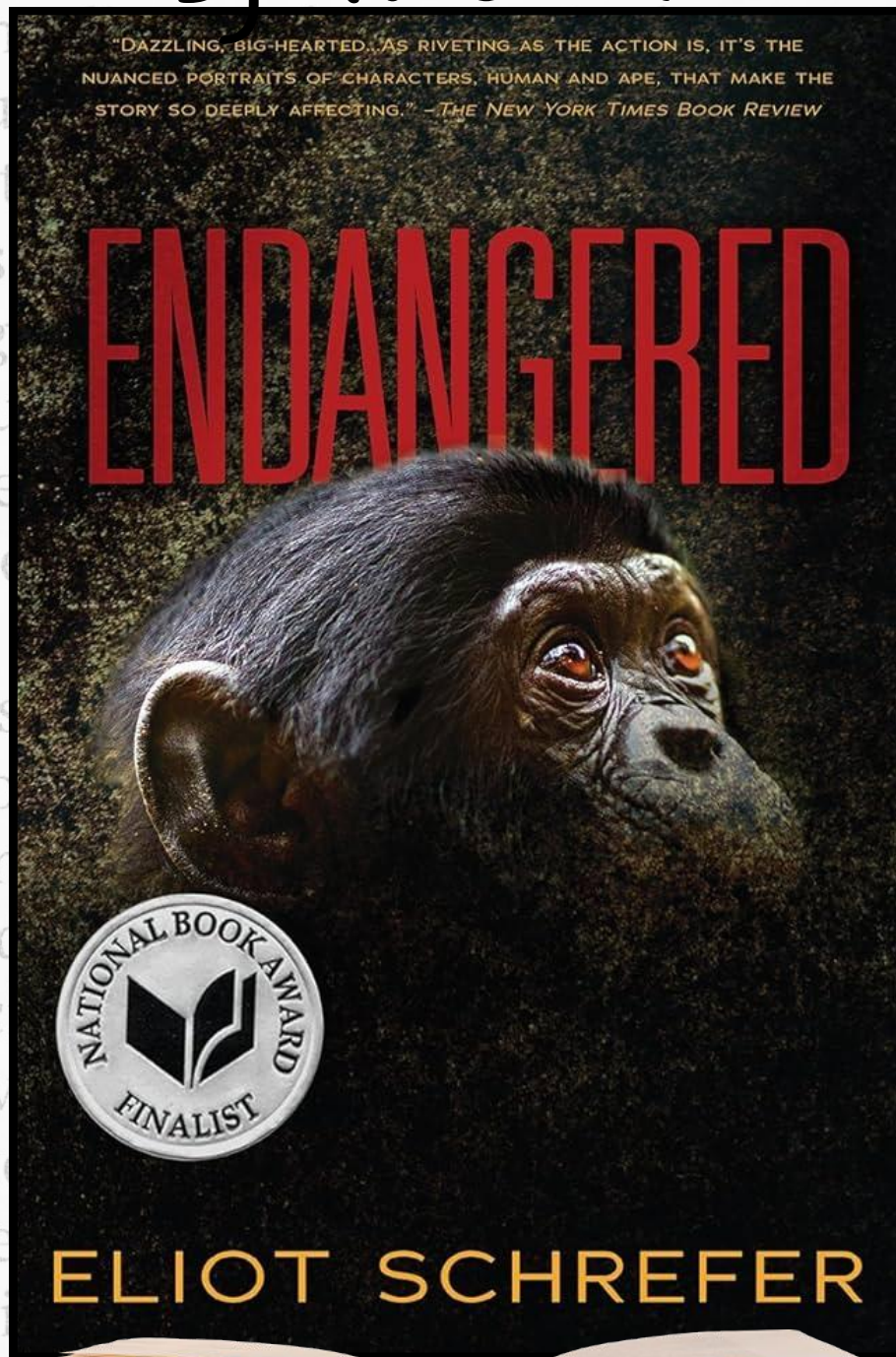
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FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

ENDANGERED

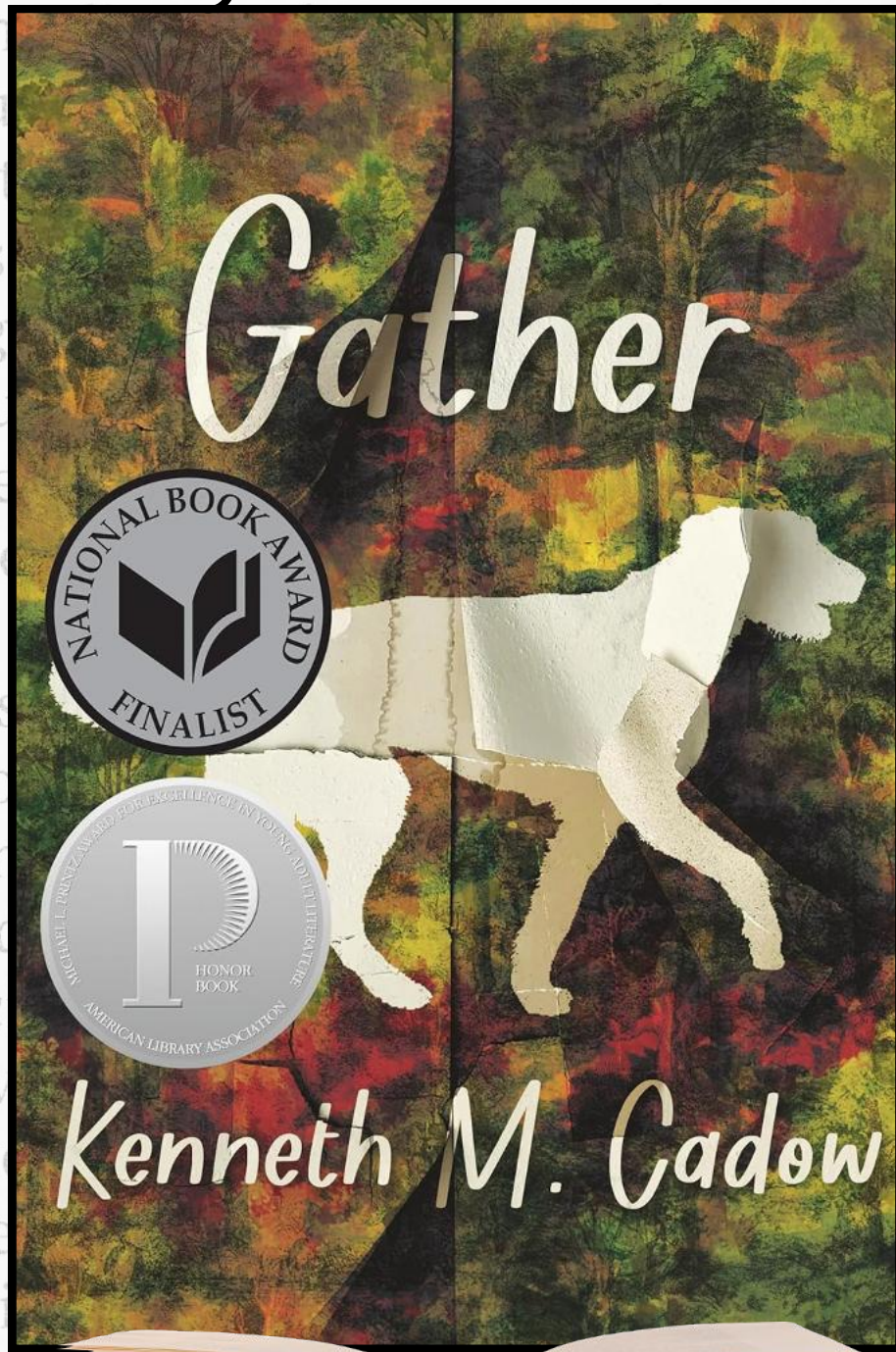
By Eliot Schrefer



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

GATHER

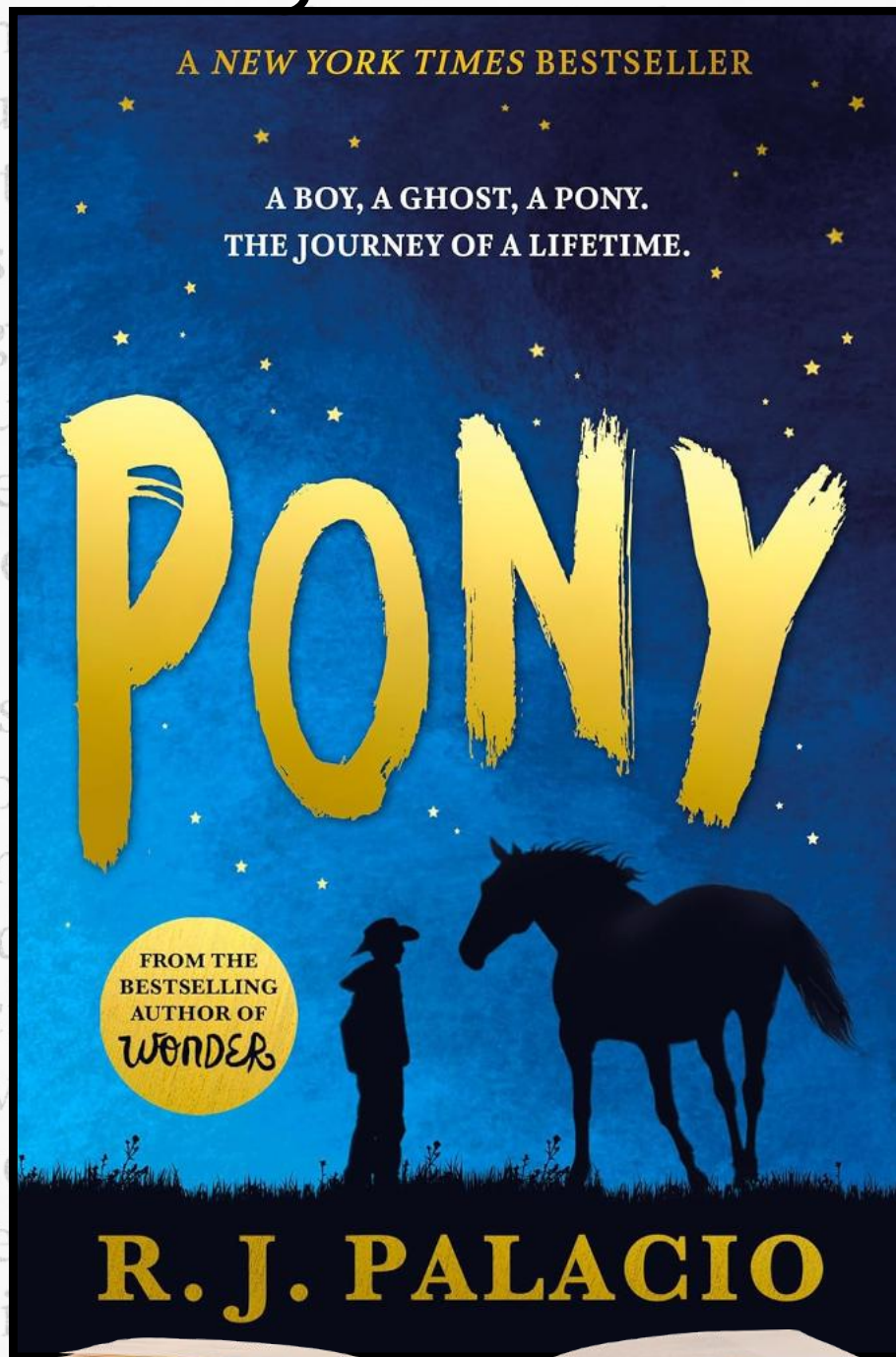
By Kenneth M. Cadow



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

PONY

By R. J. Palacio



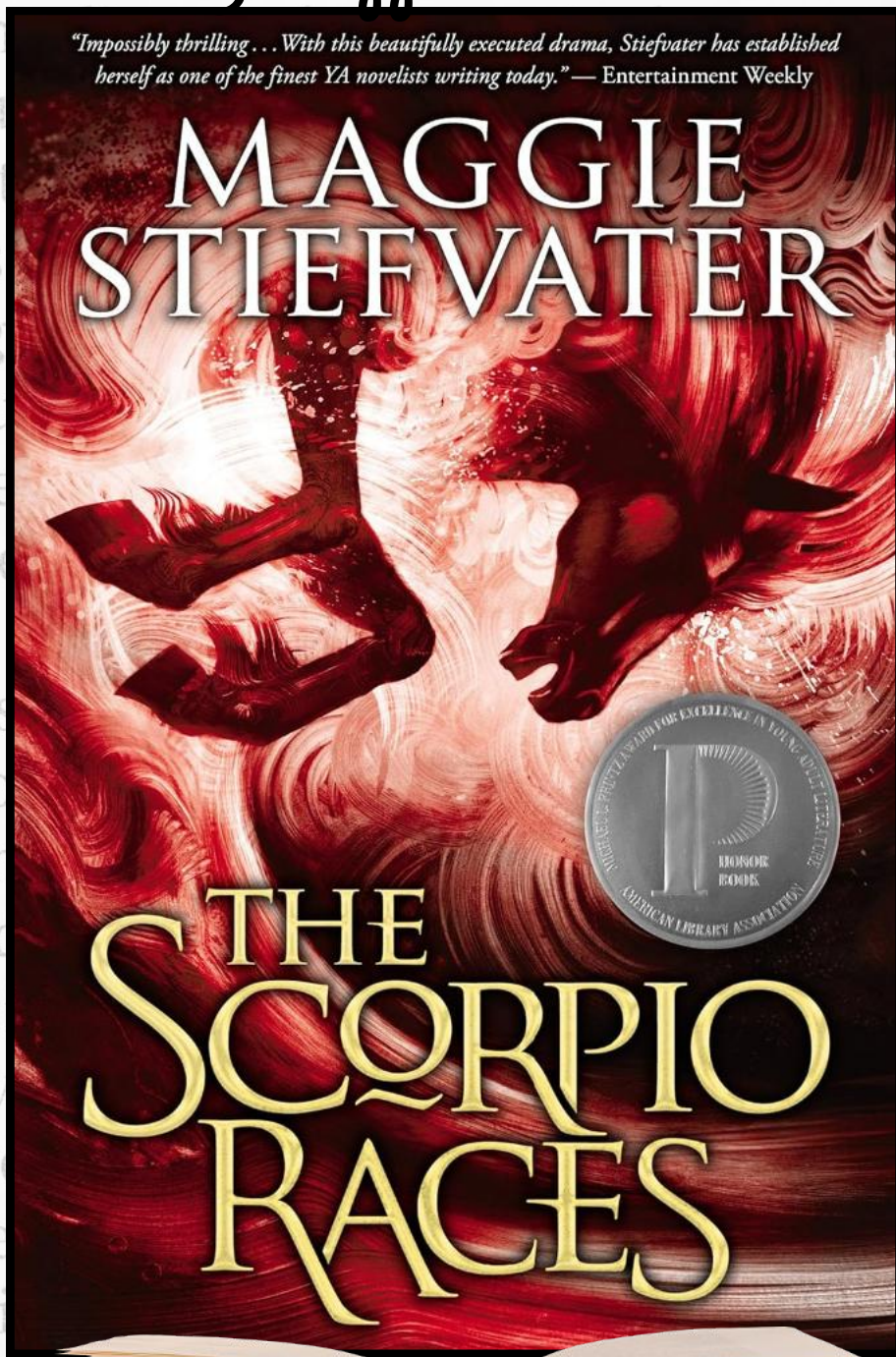
FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE SCORPIO RACES

By Maggie Stiefvater

"Impossibly thrilling... With this beautifully executed drama, Stiefvater has established herself as one of the finest YA novelists writing today." — Entertainment Weekly

MAGGIE
STIEFVATER



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

SHIVER

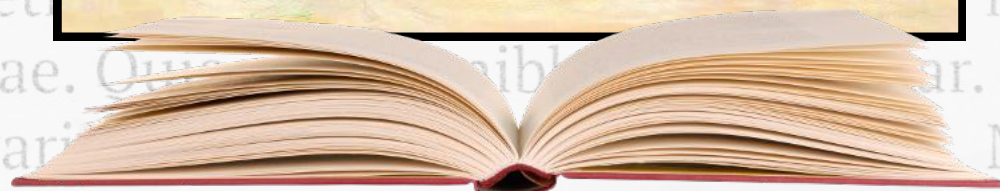
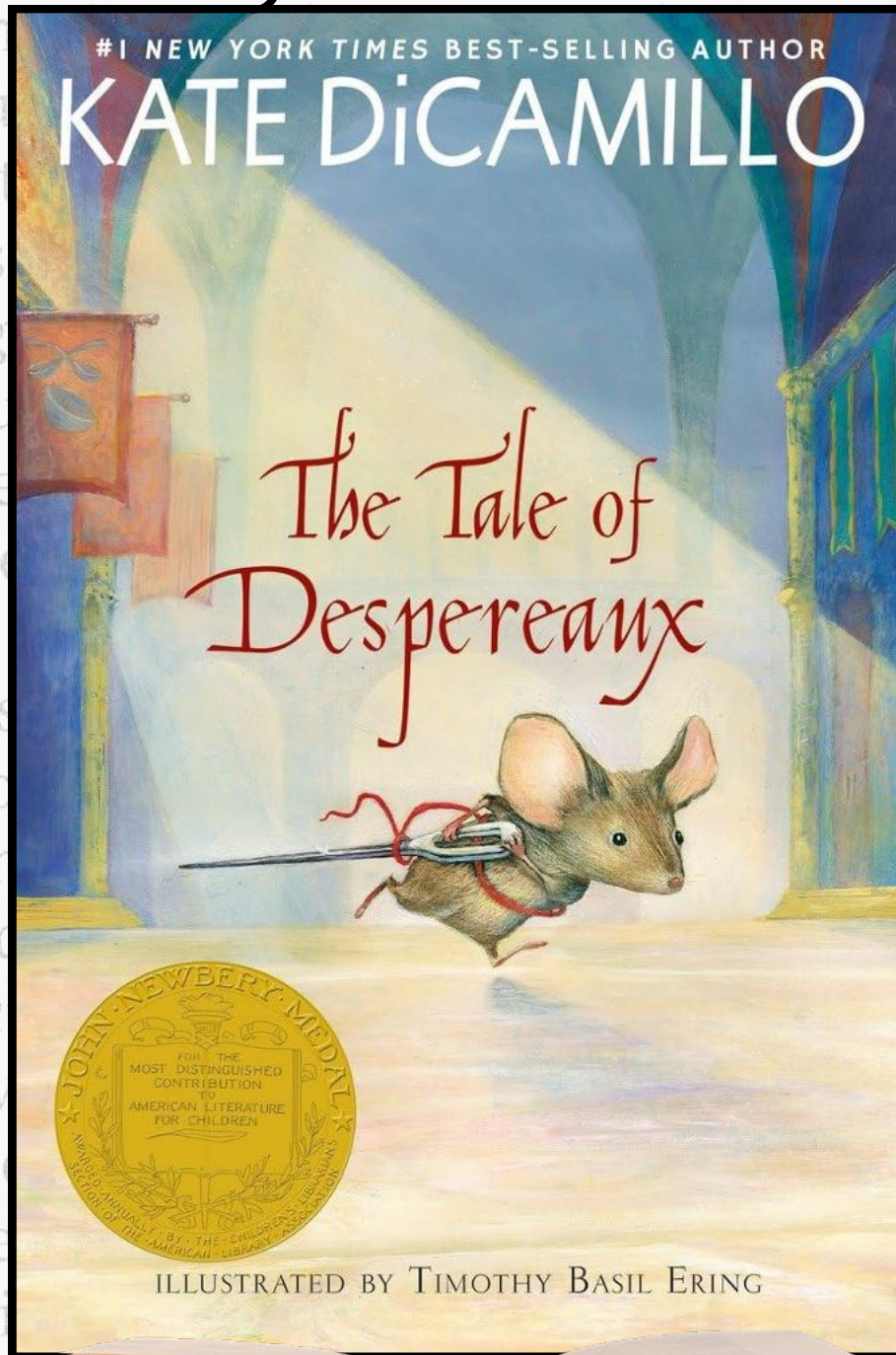
By Maggie Steifvater



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

THE TALE OF DESPEREAUX

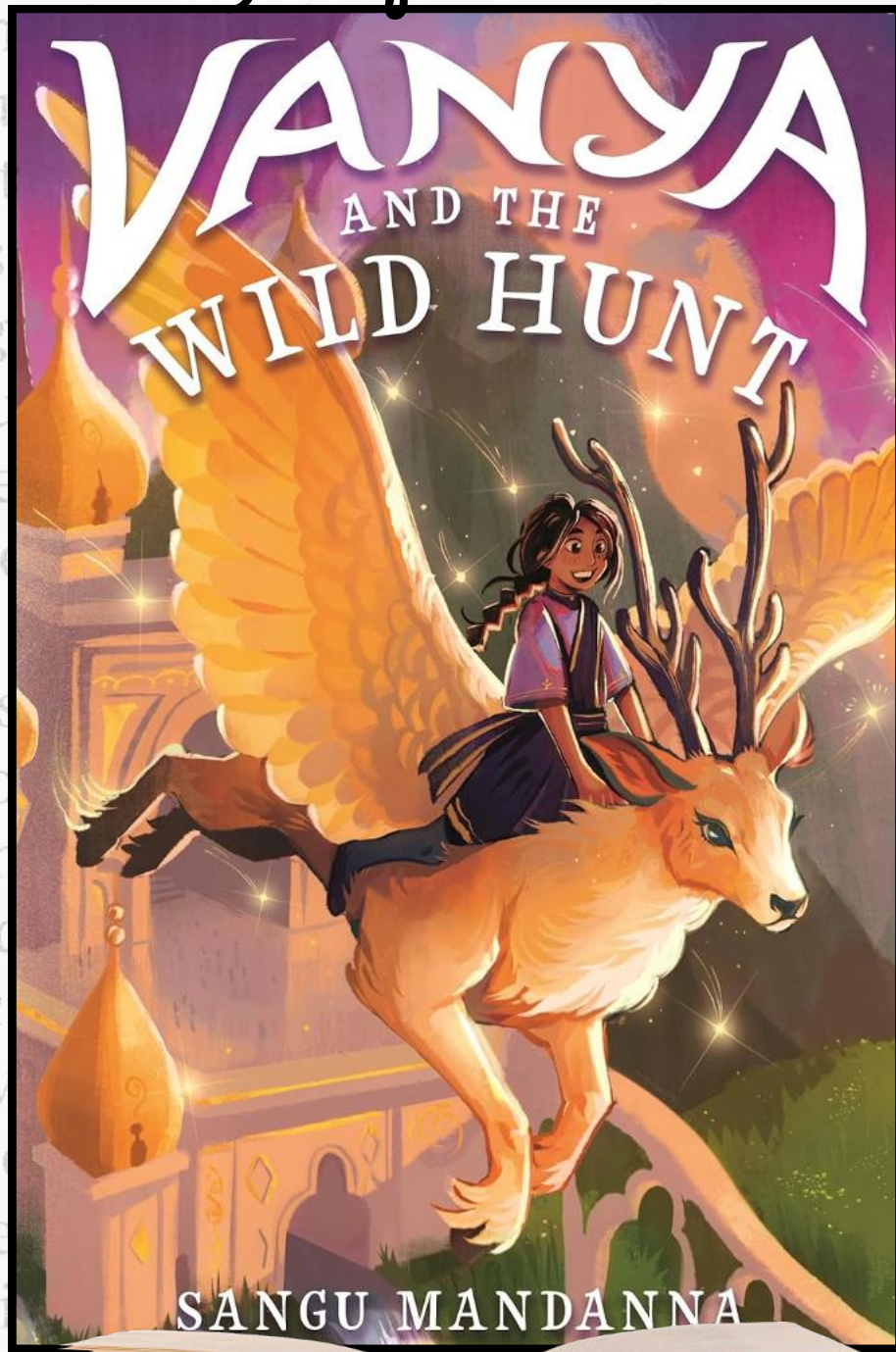
By Kate DiCamillo



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY

VANYA AND THE WILD HUNT

By Sangu Mandanna



FIRST CHAPTER FRIDAY